

Aaron Eckhart Gets 'Erased' in 'Bourne'-esque Thriller

Submitted by [BrianTT](#) [1] on May 16, 2013 - 3:28pm

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Rating: **2.5/5.0**

CHICAGO – Two talented stars – Aaron Eckhart & Liana Liberato (“Trust”) – do a remarkable job of finding the depth in paper-thin, clichéd dialogue and generic contrivances but they can’t quite pull “Erased,” now available On Demand and opening in Los Angeles tomorrow, from its B-movie trappings. If you’re a spy thriller fan or love the perpetually underrated (and in need of a better agent) Eckhart, you may be surprised. Everyone else has a better alternative this weekend.

Eckhart plays Ben Logan, a CIA Special Ops agent who has left the world of spydom behind to take care of his daughter Amy (Liberato) and work for a private security firm in Antwerp (the movie was called “The Expatriate” in its international release last year). Before Ben can realize he’s in a Robert Ludlum plot, the company that he works for is liquidated, all evidence that he worked for them (or that they even existed) is erased, and it’s clear that something major is being hidden. When Ben and Amy stand in a morgue and the answer the girl gets as to who all these bodies are is “*My co-workers,*” it’s clear our hero is in trouble.



Erased

Photo credit: Radius/TWC

The minute that Ben’s life is turned upside down and that of his daughter’s is threatened, “Erased” becomes a pretty well-paced spy thriller. Ben has to keep Amy safe, get to the bottom of the conspiracy that is trying to have him killed (and what former love interest and CIA agent Anna, played by the beautiful Olga Kurylenko, has to do with it), and stop the bad guys. With some nice international settings, well-directed action, and confident pacing, “Erased” actually has a strong narrative. My biggest problem with most of these nearly straight-to-video films is the boredom that usually accompanies them. “Erased” is never boring.

A lot of that credit for why "Erased" clicks in terms of pacing should go to its director, Phillip Stotzl, of course, but Eckhart is the beating heart of this film. He's charismatic as a spy and believable as a loving father. This is not one of those lazy, Nic Cage performances in a straight-to-video dud. It's hard to believe that Eckhart did it for little more than a paycheck but he still gives it much more of his all than a lot of his peers do in similar material (look at John Cusack's half-asleep performance in the recent "The Numbers Station" to see what I mean). Liberato is also good and Kurylenko works.



Erased

Photo credit: Radius/TWC

So why doesn't "Erased" connect the dots? Because no matter the screen charisma of Eckhart or the charm and believability of Liberato, the story here simply isn't strong enough to justify their work. In fact, the movie lets down its stars. They're giving it their all but it's in service of substandard spy plotting. The dialogue is bad all around and I gave up caring about what was happening to Ben and Amy long before the credits rolled. The action and the star power barely keep it afloat but one wishes the writers had done a little more work in terms of plot. If they had, the movie might not have been erased from multiplex release schedules stateside and relegated to On Demand.

"Erased" stars Aaron Eckhart, Olga Kurylenko, and Liana Liberato. It was directed by Phillip Stotzl. It is now available On Demand and opens in Los Angeles on May 17, 2013.



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